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## Lost in Translation? How the Culture(s) of the Technological University Dublin (DIT) could be Analysed via a lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of its Strategic Plan, and other Documents, during its Transition to Grangegorman

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**“Lost in Translation?” How the culture(s) of the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) could be analysed via a lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of its strategic plan, and other documents, during its transition to Grangegorman.**

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**Introduction**

Silver (2003) suggests that a university's culture cannot be readily identified. As academics have a strong sense of solidarity with their own occupation and subject which creates a shared culture, Clark (1983) suggests that there may also be the likelihood of rival or conflicting values within higher education as the occupations and subject cultures may have differing values to the Institutes' culture, and there can be a mosaic of subcultures making it difficult to discern what is the dominant culture.

This paper discusses some of the theoretical foundations to critical discourse analysis (CDA) and will review the principles of CDA. It will attempt to answer how CDA can be understood and what conceptual tools it offers as a lens to view DIT's changing culture and role in education and society during its transition to Grangegorman. This move from multiple sites to a '*one size fits all*' campus is believed to be about better servicing the needs of society by 'supporting the economic, social and cultural life of its people in one main campus' (DEGW, 2009). CDA focuses on the links between text and socio-cultural partners, on discourse and social action and on the power struggles or conformity within institutional documents.

First, a brief history of DIT will be supplied to set the scene of DIT's culture as influenced by state policy decisions since 1992. One main facet of culture comes from an organisation's history and purpose. Then a brief introduction to CDA will be offered to illustrate via a review of DIT's strategic documents leading to DIT's move to Grangegorman the existing, changing (if applicable) and desired learning and teaching culture within DIT. Examples at micro, meso and macro level will provide evidence of the influence that DIT's Strategic Plan has over all other documents produced internally to DIT, and which is itself influenced by government ideology.

**The Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) - Where is DIT now?**

The Dublin Institute Technology Act 1992 set the statutory foundations for an independent unified Institute, with power to confer certificate, diploma and later amended by ministerial order to award degrees in 1996. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1993 the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) received statutory recognition, as a single, multi-campus educational establishment. Many of the DIT's constituent colleges however, date back more than 100 years with an underlying vision of providing educational services needed by society (Duff, Hegarty and Hussey, 2000).

The Dublin Institute of Technology Act 1992 provides for a '*bureaucratic*' (Weber, 1947; Tiernan, Morley and Foley, 2006) structure of a governing body consisting of a Chairperson, eighteen members and the President of the Institute; a President, appointed with the approval of the Minister for Education and Science by the governing body; such directors appointed by the governing body with the approval of the Minister for Education and Science and an academic council appointed by the



governing body whose function includes the protection, maintenance and development of academic standards.

The majority of students enrolled in the DIT are studying level eight programmes (Higher Education Authority (HEA) and Forfas, 2007), and there is broad agreement within the DIT to support the Bologna Declaration (Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), 2001). The observed culture in the college, in classes, meetings and general functions is one of relaxed-formality, where students and staff are on first name basis and student representatives are involved in committees during decision-making processes where the consensus determines the outcome, e.g. when items on agendas are discussed at meetings agreement is arrived at democratically. This supports Berger and Milem's (2000) view of a '*collegial*' culture

In 2005 quasi-modularisation was introduced within the institute and there are e-learning components across the majority of modules, where students choose certain modules in their final two to three years to direct their own degrees and learning. This would purport to be a '*student directed*' learning culture. In addition to its teaching programmes, the Institute is strongly committed to research and development activities, together with developing entrepreneurship, supporting student initiatives, and has established a number of specialised units and campus companies in support of these, which, indicates another subculture of '*entrepreneurialism*'. One such example is in the Aungier Street DIT campus at the Hothouse Centre for Entrepreneurial Development.

*MagicTouch*, an industry partnership programme was initiated by the Faculty of Tourism and Food in 2005. The aim is to better structure and manage the relationship between key hospitality, tourism, events and leisure stakeholders in the marketplace. It broadly seeks to maximise the opportunities for students to increase the skills required by industry, to experience ongoing training in a working environment; to benefit from the experience and perspectives of those engaged in those sectors; and to profit from a fruitful dialogue between educators and those working in the hospitality and tourism sectors for which they are being prepared. This supports Berger and Milem's (2000) '*collegial*' and '*symbolic*' cultures within higher education. Cameron and Ettington's (1988) view is that all educational Institutions possess attributes of these culture types to varying degrees.

### **Where does DIT want to be?**

At present the DIT is in a state of transition, evolving into an integrated body, since the DIT Act of 1992. Up until recently, the DIT had six faculties: Applied Arts; Built Environment; Business; Engineering; Science; and Tourism and Food respectively, with approximately 20,000 students of

whom 12,000 are enrolled on a full-time basis pursuing programmes across the spectrum of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels.

The Minister for Education and Science signed the order, giving effect to the Institutes of Technology Act 2006 with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007; as a consequence the DIT became a designated institution under the HEA. DIT plans to relocate to a site in Grangegorman which will provide an education campus for the Institute and health services for the Health Service Executive (HSE), (DIT, 2009). The Faculty of Tourism and Food and the Faculty of Applied Arts have recently been merged into the College of Arts and Tourism (from February 2010) with a change in management structures and personnel.<sup>1</sup>

Discourse, text and language used in plans, the element of hegemony, i.e. the Department of Education and Science directing, delaying and its control of the process, influencing the organisation and the stakeholders involved, will indicate (albeit in advance of DIT's move) a certain learning and teaching culture prevailing. Also, the effects of globalisation and the increasing importance of a '*knowledge society*' and '*smart economy*' within our economic and social structure will have an influence on the culture within DIT's strategic plans for the development of Grangegorman.

With these changes already afoot, and as cultures shift as the institution develops over time, CDA of DIT's Strategic Plan (2009) and other supporting documents will be used as a lens to show how DIT can maintain its *student led*, *student centred*, *collegial* and *entrepreneurial* cultures within a more, or less, bureaucratic structure of one main campus via the influence of its strategic document. To better understand CDA the following sections introduce the main tenets of CDA and the theories involved before methods for analysis and a 'frame' of analyses is outlined.

### **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

So what is CDA? In social life interactions and communications (discourse) we talk, listen and analyse what is being said or not being said. In formal versus casual interactions we find ourselves using different rhetorical device and language to express ourselves because of '*time and place*', and at times dialogue and text is used to include as well as exclude, e.g. marketing *jargon* and accountancy *lingo*.

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<sup>1</sup> Two directors of the old Faculties of Applied Arts and Faculty of Tourism and Food, and other candidates competed for one post of Dean of the College of Arts and Tourism which was appointed at the end of February 2010.

Critical theories start with the Frankfurt School (post World War 2) while critical linguistics are more recent (1970's onwards) and emerged from the UK and Australia (van Dijk, 1998). Discourse is defined as written or spoken communication or discussion; or the formal treatment of a subject through speech or writing (Collins English Dictionary, 2009). Discourse, according to Foucault (1972; 2009) is controlled by objects: what can be spoken of; ritual or tradition: where and how one can speak; power and dominance: who may speak. Analysis of discourse within CDA therefore, views actions, social partners, power and dominance within spoken communications, written communications or symbols and images (van Dijk, 1998). CDA is thus difficult to categorise into one or other method or theoretical approach (van Dijk, 2000). It refers to the use of an ensemble of techniques for the study of textual practice and language use as social and cultural practices (Fairclough, 1992). This is neither a quantitative (counting nouns) nor qualitative (narrative analysis) approach but provides a multidisciplinary means of questioning the use of words or answers (or lack thereof).

CDA is a trans-disciplinary paradigm providing classification within the social sciences, modernism, and structuralism, postmodernism and feminist approaches mostly following Foucault's (1972) ideology of CDA. It can first be seen as a poststructuralist view (Foucault 1972; 2009) that discourse operates across local institutional sites, and that texts have a construction or de-construction function of discourse or policy in forming and shaping human identities and actions (see also Bennington and Derrida, 1993).

Foucault was also influenced by Gramsci's (1971) struggle for power. Gramsci (1971) viewed government and politics as the struggle for power and hegemony as critically important (especially in the current global economic climate). Hegemony is domination of one over another e.g. DIT is heavily influenced and controlled by the government in power through legislation and budgetary controls. For example, higher education Institutions (HEI) have become increasingly under the pressure of governments (especially DIT and within Ireland, the Department of Education and Science<sup>2</sup> governs what happens) to function as businesses operating for profit making and within competition of other Institutions for potential students as if they were consumers. The operation of the Central Admissions Office (CAO) determines this competition of students allocating places countrywide based on the points system. A lot of the Institute's income is still derived from Government and European Union (EU) funding but in recent years due to increasing lack of Irish and EU funds, all Institutions are looking to other sources for income and competing for grants, scholarships and sometimes for investment from private sources within their related industries.

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<sup>2</sup> Department of Education and Skills since March 2010, with a new Minister, Mary Coughlan.

Foucault also referred to knowledge as a powerful transformation agent in people. Tools or techniques of power such as examination and interviews are used in society's order of discourse of *genre* and *styles* to illustrate power formations, dominance and in some cases subordination or marginalisation. He established that knowledge was both the *creator* of power and *creation* of power (1980). Bourdieu (1991) continues with this view of sociology and the assumption that text and interactions with text become forms of '*cultural capital*' with exchange value in particular social fields. Text does not occur in isolation but is influenced by the socio-political and socio-historical interests (Hyatt, 2008). CDA draws from neo-Marxist cultural theory to explain where discourse and power struggle is produced and used within political economies, which therefore produce and articulate broader ideological interests, social formations and movements within these fields (see also Hall, 1996) such as the prevailing elements of the '*knowledge society*' and '*smart economy*' influencing current policies (Building Ireland's Smart Economy, 2008; Ahead of the Curve, 2004).

Habermas of the Frankfurt School and his domain of '*public sphere*' (1984) suggests a reverse concept of Gramsci's idea which is an influence of society over policy decisions and '*marketing communications genre*' which is in operation at the moment within the global recession. Habermas viewed social evolution as dependent on a cultural innovation and learning as well as technological communications and argument. However, systems and social evolution cannot go through an argumentative process each time changes are to occur or societies would not be able to function. Discourse for Habermas would ideally occur with an open exchange of communication, giving way to agents of power and power dynamics which would arrive at consensus through argumentation (just as in a '*collegial*' culture).

Continuing with Foucault (1972; 2009) *genre* is different types of text, ways of speaking and power struggles within text and context (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). Bernstein (1981; 1996) refers to the '*field*' structure of text or set of texts as a re-contextualisation of a structure of social practice(s), e.g. within education where knowledge is produced in the upper echelons of the education system - books, strategies, and teaching manuals. It is then embedded in pedagogy at local levels - class materials, operational plans and teaching plans - to '*fit*' the discourse at local level, i.e. the socio-cultural influences at local level. In fact, Van Leeuwen (1993; 2008), states that this analysis of *genre and field* provides the plurality of discourse at Institutional level which illustrates the culture(s) found in documents and discursive practices in the classroom and staff room which include rhetorical structures and argumentative structure of the text (Fairclough, 1995; 2003) and an integrated analysis of text(s) which involve a number of different '*semiotic*' means. '*Semiosis*' as referred to by Fairclough, Jessop and Sayer (2004) is discourse in an abstract sense through language or visuals. This is differentiated from discourse (as a count noun) as a category for designating particular ways of

representing particular aspects of social life, which is defined through its relationship with genre and field (Fairclough, 2004).

As illustrated through the theories above, analysis of discourse practice is concerned with knowledge and society with aspects of text production and interpretation and involves the detailed moment-by-moment clarification of how participants construct, interpret and sometimes deconstruct discourse and texts. Wodak and Meyer (2009) refer to discourse as structured forms of knowledge, whereas text refers to speech or written documents. By critical discourse analysis, theorists (above) suggest it aims to systematically explore often unclear relationships of cause and effect and determination between texts, social and cultural relationships within power structures and hegemony (Fairclough, 1993: 135).

The principal focus of CDA is on text which are social actions of spoken and written language which form '*how we do things*' within Institutions (in this way referring to the Institution's culture).

Examples are written text (books used, communications sent, strategies and policies), spoken text (classroom interactions, tutorial processes) visual texts (college web pages, academic job adverts, college adverts). These '*genres*' within texts are historical and socio-cultural actions open to invention and reinvention, but some text will continue to perform its fundamental purpose. For example, the classroom is an area where written text (books) can be deconstructed and reconstructed through interpretation, understanding and dissemination of knowledge; and where spoken text (discourse and interactions with learner and lecturer) can be analysed for cultural and social interactions of power and authority and subordination and sometimes marginalisation.

As observed earlier, within the Faculty of Tourism and Food the culture and atmosphere is one of '*collegiality*' and '*learner centred*' in the classes, committee meetings and learning environments. The use of CDA as a tool for analysis in the following section will illustrate how CDA can view what the culture now is in DIT, and what it hopes to be in the future campus at Grangegorman. This is influenced through government, economic, socio-cultural and internal cultural influences.

CDA makes visible the way in which Institutions and their discourse shape us through their culture. By working with documents looking at text, sentences and players within society who may have influence over the documents it develops into something like peeling away layers of an onion.

CDA can therefore apply interdisciplinary techniques of text analysis to look at how texts construct representations of the world, social identities and social relationships. Fairclough (1993: 136) suggests that he uses critical discourse analysis through three means: text, social practice and discourse practice (production and interpretation of text). He also recommends during analysis to

remember that discourse is shaped and constrained by social structures (class, status, age, ethnicity and gender) and by culture (Fairclough, 2000).

When using CDA on text and documents approach the documents like any ordinary reader and then return to the document as an analyst asking what it says, what it means and how could it have been written differently, targeting different readers. Fairclough (1993) suggests text should neither be taken holistically or individually but analysed within '*genres*' or '*hegemony*' within which the document has been constructed. Huckin (1997) suggests '*framing*' the message. Following on from '*genre*' and '*frame*' this is when the minute levels of analysis begin such as sentence, phrases and words. According to Huckin (1997: 81-89; 2002: 6-13) when using CDA you should look for the following:

- Topicalization (choosing what to put into the subject position) influences the readers perception of the document;
- Agency or the evidence of power relations or omission of agency;
- Nominalisation (converting a verb into a noun) and the use of passive verbs;
- Presupposition or persuasive rhetoric (what is said by agencies of power carries more weight);
- Insinuations, subtle implicit statements, double meaning, connotations (negative or positive can be persuasive);
- Tone of the text using certain words or modal phrases can convey certain pitches;
- Words that 'register' and provide neutrality (or not) within text.

Alternatively, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 93-96) suggest the following four areas of analysis:

- **Colonisation/ Appropriation**

This is the movement of *discourses* and *genres* from one social practice to another either by colonisation (and so affect by power), or via appropriation (and domination effects) of one *genre* into another entails the re-contextualisation within the latter, i.e. social policy into educational policy and vice versa.

- **Globalisation/ Localisation**

As markets have become more global the effects at local level are obvious. Within education we have had to adapt to the global discourse and provision of services where our courses have either been modelled on European (Bologna) or American (semesters and modules) models. Terminology within Institutes and departments within Institutes have also taken on a global feel, e.g. course titles illustrate

their global market appeal with names such as International Hospitality Management or International Culinary Arts and Bar Services Management<sup>3</sup>.

- **Reflexivity/ Ideology**

Ideologies are discursive dominated-related constructions of practices from particular perspectives (and in that sense biased). How can this relate to other moments of social practices and other perspectives and therefore be reflexive (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 27). How do you '*fit in*' with the organisations overall ideology and culture? Does it '*fit*' with your ideology and style?

- **Identity/ Difference**

Struggles for identity are also struggles for difference (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 96) but in some ways discourse can provide identities, i.e. '*I*', '*we*', '*the*'; the individual or the collective, the marginalised or the accepted.

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) do not suggest the above categories of analysis are '*the*' agenda to be followed when conducting critical analysis of discourse. In fact Fairclough (2009: 25 & 205) offers another frame of reference for analysis of social practices or social discourse:

- Activities – what's going on here?
- Subjects and their social relations – who are the stakeholders involved in the text, discourse, social practice?
- Objects and instruments – what is the purpose of the text, discourse, social practice?
- Time and place – context.
- Social subjects – what are the beliefs, knowledge, values, norms of the stakeholders;
- Discourse/ semiotic means – (see earlier explanation).

However Fairclough (1995) cautions further by suggesting that different analysts and different people interpret text differently. So how could CDA be applied to the understanding DIT's learning and teaching environment within strategic plans for its transition to Grangegorman and what does it show in relation to DIT's changing culture? The following section illustrates this through a case study of DIT using CDA as its lens.

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<sup>3</sup> These are two new courses in DIT.

## **CDA of DIT plans and documents relating to Grangegorman**

### **How is DIT going to get to Grangegorman?**

Harvey (1989) argues that economic changes have a profound effect on culture and society. We find ourselves in a culture of development and emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurialism that lead individuals to be under constant pressure to re-skill themselves as existing skills become outdated. Globalisation in recent years has also been a major force in the de-traditionalisation of society where habits and customs become questionable and not accepted as the norm (Giddens, 1994) as more and more people worldwide increasingly share common experiences and fragmentation within society becomes diminished.

Educational Institutions' strategic plans can highlight how this is achieved internally and with DIT's transition to Grangegorman the old traditional learning environments can be replaced with more open systems of flexibility and inclusiveness, innovation and entrepreneurialism. At macro level the main 'text' used will be the DIT Act from 1992, and amended 2006 Act, as few other government documents refer to the transition to Grangegorman. At meso level the main 'text' used will be the current DIT Strategic Plan (2009-2011) together with supporting documents such as presentations and working papers within DIT relating to Grangegorman. At micro level examples of text from other DIT documents such as the current student prospectus and the images portrayed will illustrate the current and future 'type' of student body.

Within these documents a frame of reference suggested by Fairclough (1993) of text (written or spoken language), social practice (context of culture and institution) and discourse practice (production and interpretation of text) will be used.

### **CDA Case Study of DIT:**

#### **DIT Act 1992 (and reference to the amended Institutes of Technology Act, 2006)**

The statutory position of the DIT is set out in the DIT Act 1992 and made provisions for the operation of the Institute within the 24 sections (see appendix 1). The Grangegorman Development Agency was made a statutory body since 2006 after the Institutes of Technology Act of the same year.

*Discursive practice:* My interpretation of these Acts suggests that it is inter-discursively of a political and bureaucratic genre and hence the DIT was formed under a *bureaucratic organisational style* lending itself to a *bureaucratic culture*.



*Text:* Most of the provisions of the act refer to its organisational structure and hierarchy, with the President of the Institute at its head supported by Directors of the Institute, staff and students. It also refers to its rules and regulations, formalisation and most importantly under the first provision of commencement; the Act will only become legal on a '*day that the Minister shall appoint*', i.e. state control over the Institute.

*Social Practice:* As DIT is in a state of transition to Grangegorman since the amalgamation of the colleges post 1992 it is surprising that the act did not refer to this. This Act was subsequently amended under the Institutes of Technology Act 2006 which provides for the provision *for the purchase and disposal of property and lands with the approval from the Minister*, which again is evidence of a *bureaucratic structure* but also an inference to the transition to Grangegorman for DIT.

The 2006 Act also makes provision for the Grangegorman Development Agency, a statutory body, to be established. Also, some of the narratives within the 2006 Act refer to both the knowledge economy (*education and training enhances employability, flexibility and adoptability*); and globalisation (*tertiary education and training needs to proactively up-skill the workforce*). Both of these acts (1992 and 2006) show the control by the State over the Institute but also the influence and contribution the Institute can make towards the State: *contribution to the economic, cultural and social development of the State*.

This is also transferred into rhetoric within the strategic policies of DIT and reference to the recent DIT Strategic Plan (2009-2011) to highlight some evidence of this is made.

### **DIT's Strategic Plan 2009 – 2011 (appendix 2)**

*Discursive Practice:* The culture within DIT's Faculty of Tourism and Food is continuing as bureaucratic with collegial, student centred and entrepreneurial cultural elements. This can be seen through analysis of the vision and mission statement of DIT. The narrative genre is semi-formal with an emphasis on report style and use of coloured charts to highlight areas of importance (which can be also interpreted as promotional). The rhetoric is that of student inclusion and industry participation for economic development with elements of social influences included to show the importance of the Institute within the economy. It is also promotional, as the following text highlights:

*Text:*

*DIT will be the first choice in Ireland for people who seek professional, career focused learning and discovery in a vibrant environment renowned for the application of research, innovation and creativity.*

*Located in the heart of Ireland's capital city, Dublin Institute of Technology provides a wide range of programmes, at diverse levels, in an innovative, responsive and caring learning environment to students of all ages and backgrounds. In doing so DIT:*

- *Blends the academic excellence of a traditional university with career-focused learning, discovery and the application of knowledge;*
- *Emphasises quality in its teaching, scholarship, research and support for entrepreneurship; and*
- *Actively sustains Ireland's social, cultural, technological and economic development. (DIT Strategic Plan, 2009-2011)*

Analysis of the above clearly illustrates a culture of inclusion and one of student focused and centred strategy (*choice, people, students of all ages and backgrounds*). It also focused on the elements of the knowledge society (*technological, application of knowledge*) and smart economy (*economic development, quality in research and entrepreneurship*) as influenced by government policies (*responsive*).

*Student(s)* only occurs once in both the vision and mission statement which may seem a little unusual for an Institute that professes to be '*learner centred*'. However, in DIT's explanation of the vision and mission statement the noun *student* appears five times together with the pronouns of *their* also five times, further emphasising the importance of student.

Equally important, although mentioned in the vision and mission statement only once again are '*knowledge*' and '*economy*'. Again in DIT's explanation of the vision and mission statement both words are only reiterated once which, upon reflection, would place *students* more central to the strategic plan and important to the developing economy and knowledge within rather than the other way around, hence providing the culture within DIT of *student centred*.

There is also emphasis on an entrepreneurial culture. The section on '*support for entrepreneurship*' and '*career focused*' suggests a connection with industry not only for stakeholders but also for students wanting a closer connection with industry and employment and development of society. *Entrepreneurship* is mentioned once in the vision and mission statements and once again in DIT's explanation of its values. It also resonates from the policies of government in their search for sustained economic development - *knowledge society* and the *smart economy*.

*Social Practice:* Before the DIT strategy document presents the vision and mission statements the heading on the paper suggests DIT is “*a step closer to the real world*”. This phrase is endemic throughout all DIT’s documents. It suggests that not only will students get an education and qualification but this education will be significant when they enter the jobs market as they will be prepared as the education provided by DIT will have application to the world of industry and entrepreneurship.

There is no emphasis on person, student, teacher or college, just simply ‘*a*’ step. Upon evaluating this statement a reader may interpret ‘*a*’ step as ‘*my*’ step. It may also be interpreted as DIT’s closer transition to Grangegorman as the ‘*real*’ campus as this phrase appeared for the first time after the decision was made to move to Grangegorman. This phrase is dominant in all marketing materials.

With this transition in mind looking at the vision and mission statement the emphasis on ‘*traditional*’ could be questioned. DIT is one of the oldest educational Institutes in Ireland tracing its origins back to the turn of the last century substantiates this. Most of the other Institutes of Technology were formed after the Institutes of Technology Act 2006. Interpretation of the inclusion of this word in the context of the statement suggests that DIT wants to retain certain elements of the traditional learning environment while embracing a more inclusive and open system of education. It may also be interpreted as being the ‘*leader*’ within the IoT sector and hence providing for itself an element of competitive advantage.

Supporting the Strategic Plan are internal documents referring to Grangegorman which are reviewed in the following section.

### **DIT draft documents referring to Grangegorman (appendix 3)**

The new campus proposed for Grangegorman will underpin the Institutes promotion of a new learning paradigm that involves active learning and flexible approaches to course delivery, while helping the Institute respond efficiently to a new student population (DEWG, 2009).

*Discursive Practice:* Rhetoric within the draft plans for Grangegorman (which are in part re-contextualised from, and influenced by the DIT Strategic Plan and government policies) suggests that government decisions have implications for the type of plan which will eventually be implemented. Sections highlight and reiterate throughout, ‘*awaiting government decision which may have implications for packages developed.*’ The draft plans also highlight the importance of staff and student involvement throughout the planning stages of Grangegorman where ‘*engagement of staff and students critical*’.

All of the plans for Grangegorman are working papers and in draft form, constantly being revised and updated, most of the information examined has been obtained from presentations made either at Institute, School or Faculty level, where feedback and guidance is requested from colleagues for the development and project team during or after the meetings. This supports earlier suggestions that DIT remains an Institute with a '*collegial*' culture. It also agrees with the *argumentative discourse* purported by Habermas.

However it is suggested that the process is lengthy and initial debates about Grangegorman (post 1992 & 2006 etc.) continuously change due to the changing nature of the economy and society, and the individuals involved in the planning process<sup>4</sup>. It also supports an earlier suggestion of hegemony at political level and a rigid *bureaucratic culture* which is further outlined in the following text:

Text:

*The plans for Grangegorman are ambitious; a flagship development providing a modern consolidated campus for the Dublin Institute of Technology [.....] It would create new economic and social opportunities for people living in this part of Dublin and improve the [.....] education infrastructure of the city.*

*Our future economic success will depend on innovation and skills. Investment in education and training, lifelong learning and research will help us to earn our living in the world economy. These are strong themes of the report.*

A more recent part of the draft planning processes (The Learning Environment on the New Campus, January 2010) presented the '*need to provide for new ways of learning*' which included '*collaborative*', '*integrated*', '*blended*' learning which can take place anywhere and anytime providing for more flexibility, '*immersed*' in the real world and '*hybridism*' of activities. The rhetoric here suggests a move away from the '*traditional*' learning styles and an embrace of the postmodern '*student centred*' and '*self-directed*' learning cultures. Another part of the draft plan from June 2009 (Spatial Development) which indicates the need to align space which would intentionally support '*student-centred learning strategies*' supports this theory.

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<sup>4</sup> There have been two Presidents of the Institute since the Grangegorman idea was suggested, not to mention many changes in staffing this year alone. The changes at government level need also be taken into account such as the three Ministers of Education (and Science or Skills) involved during the transition.

*Social Practice:* The language within the above statement by an Taoiseach<sup>5</sup> also conflicts with what was recommended in the McCarthy Report (2009) and, therefore, suggests that the government ignores the report and continues to give the Grangegorman development its backing for the reasons of ‘*economic success*’ which depends on ‘*innovation and skills*’ and therefore needs ‘*investment in education*’.

The above is a statement from Taoiseach Brian Cowan referring to the DIT Draft report on Grangegorman at a site visit in May 2009. Very soon after this a government commissioned report, widely known as ‘*An Bord Snip*’ or ‘*The McCarthy Report*’ was published in July 2009. The McCarthy Report recommended that funding for Grangegorman be discontinued and the lands associated with the campus be sold off to recover monies needed by the state. This advice was not considered following former Minister Batt O’Keefe confirmed his intention to sign off on the first phase of development. The recent reshuffle of the Dail and reassigning ministers to new departmental duties will also affect the progress of the development. Information on the planning stages of Grangegorman is frequently communicated through the Office of the President of the Institute and one such communication will now be analysed.

#### **Communications from the President’s Office (appendix 4)**

*Discursive Practice:* Analysis of an email received from the President’s office in relation to Grangegorman and its effects on the organisation of DIT indicate that there is an emphasis on participation and inclusion with rhetoric such as ‘*you know*’, ‘*extensive discussions*’ and ‘*views expressed*’. Discourse such as the plural ‘*we*’, ‘*will help us*’ and ‘*in consultation with colleagues*’ provides a culture of ‘*collegiality*’. Also evidence of a student centred culture prevails: ‘*to provide the best student experience*’ and an ‘*excellent DIT experience for all students*’.

*Text:* In addition Bakhtin (1981), suggests that element of individuals ‘*voice*’ influence documents and power levels within and that leaders styles (genre) come through the discourse. Looking for the Presidents ‘*voice*’ throughout the email it is evident that when the message needs to be emphasised the President reverts to ‘*I recognise*’, ‘*it is my intention*’ and ‘*I believe*’. Whereas when the message needs to be encouraging and inclusive he reverts to ‘*we*’, ‘*us*’ and ‘*our*’.

*Social Practice:* There are a number of changes being made not only with the imminent transition to Grangegorman but within the bureaucratic hierarchy of DIT as indicated in the email from the Office of the President. There have also been changes within the student population and community. How

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Taoiseach’ is the Irish Prime Minister

these students '*choose*' to study in DIT is influenced predominantly by its culture and evidence of this is through the 2010 prospectus.

### **2010 Undergraduate Prospectus (appendix 5)**

*Discursive Practice:* The 2010 undergraduate prospectus for DIT is quite attractive in a 'pop art' postmodern style with graphics and designs to interest a potential student. It is intended to be promotional and user friendly with faculty by faculty lists of courses to aid '*persons*' seeking admission to the college. The use of the word '*person*' in the disclaimer at the back of the book suggests that anyone can apply and they will not be considered a '*student*' until they have been accepted into the college.

The potential student on reading the prospectus should understand that DIT is an Institute that values the student as part of the wider *collegial* community, where they have a place and will be provided with an education applicable to industry, society and economies needs if they so decided to apply to any one of the courses listed in the prospectus.

*Text:* The phrase '*DIT - A step closer to the real world*' is the first dictum anyone who reads the prospectus is faced with. This is located beside the Presidents welcome which upon analysis is very similar in discourse to his emails. His frequent use of the plural, '*our*', '*we*' and '*us*' (in total c. 10 times) indicates an atmosphere for the new student of team work and inclusion. '*You*' is used to direct the student about their choice following some discourse about current students and what it is like for them. He has only used the singular '*I*' once at the end of the welcome which is used to emphasis his desire for the student to choose the Institute.

*Social Practice:* Rhetoric throughout the prospectus is about student and learner centeredness, about industry connectivity, inclusiveness and careers focused, with emphasis on the global economy: Language such as '*a place to belong*' and '*mature students are a valued part of the DIT community*' would indicate inclusion, importance and for students to '*fit in*'.

Also the word '*community*' suggests another social group for the students to move into; '*Education for a global economy*' and '*create new knowledge and new ways of understanding society*' not only suggests the emphasis on the applicability of DIT studies for industry and future careers, but also the connection with international and local societies needs; *Dublin's City Centre is our Campus* would signify the imminent transition from multiple sites around the city to a new campus at Grangegorman.

## Conclusion and personal reflection on the use and understanding of CDA

This paper illustrated my understanding of using critical discourse analysis as a lens to understand the changing culture within an educational institution and the possible influences of the state, the economy and society on '*the way we do things*' internal to our organisation. DIT is used as case study to illustrate the use of CDA during DIT's transition to Grangegorman, via a frame suggested by Fairclough (1993).

What has been discovered through CDA of DIT's culture is that it is predominantly '*collegial*' and '*student centred*' with elements of '*entrepreneurialism*' driven by '*bureaucracy*' from State level. These cultures and subcultures are heavily influenced by the staff and students within DIT, but also the changing nature of society and the global economy we work in, as Government policies, especially the DIT Act 1992 (and amended Act 2006), play an important role in DIT's functions.

As the community with DIT constantly changes, the discourses at local and hierarchical level take on new '*styles*'. It remains to be seen if DIT's culture will change dramatically once the transition to Grangegorman is complete as most of the documents referred to found their origins within the DIT Strategic Plan (2009) (social and cultural influence) and the Acts and policy reports from government (state and economic influence).

CDA being a trans-disciplinary approach and multidisciplinary theory indicates it can mean different things to different analysts and interpretations can be very different (see section on theories above). Time and place and contextual situations will influence the analysis as will the documents chosen for analysis. Further research might employ a past, present and future study to continue once DIT has relocated to Grangegorman. This, however, would take time and may not be feasible as the proposed date of moving has been postponed many times and CDA is also time consuming as there are many frameworks or methods to choose from.

Starting with a frame, such as that suggested by Fairclough (1993) can restrict but also manage the analysis. My background in social sciences and the services industry with focus on marketing has led me to review the documents used in this paper with a '*marketing*' hat on especially in the final document used, i.e. the undergraduate student prospectus 2010. Upon reflection this '*hat*' could also be used as a *genre* of analysis of '*promotional cultures*' found within texts.

Documents used in relation to the Grangegorman project are working documents constantly being updated and changed. The next meeting to discuss the draft plans and papers for Grangegorman will take place in April 2010 and will provide an insight into the development. Not only has the

community within DIT changed since 2010 began a new Minister has been appointed to the Department of Education and Skills which will influence the projects progress.

Finally, while the use of one document would have been adequate, it is also limiting and therefore to illustrate the use of CDA, and to understand how internal DIT texts originate through the influences of government (State) on strategic plans (Institute), a holistic view was employed. If I was to use one document I would choose the student prospectus, to support my previous paper on student motives to enter education, as these students can be greatly influenced by the cultures presented in marketing materials given to potential students.



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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1:**

#### **DIT Act 1992 (sections)**

1. Commencement
2. Interpretation
3. Establishment of the Institute
4. Membership of the Institute
5. Functions of the Institute
6. Governing body
7. Functions of the Governing Body
8. Dissolution of the Governing body
9. President
10. Directors of the Institute
11. Academic Council
12. General Provisions in relation to staff
13. Provisions in relation to existing staff
14. Programmes and budget
15. Annual report and information
16. Grants
17. Accounts and audits
18. Fees and charges
19. Transfer of property and liabilities
20. Preservation of contracts and continuance of legal proceedings
21. Inspection
22. Expenses
23. Regulations
24. Short Title

**Appendix 2:****DIT's Strategic Plan 2009-2011 (extract)****DIT – a step closer to the real world  
Vision, Mission and Values****Vision:**

To be one of the most creative learner-centred Institutions in Europe, contributing to the development of the Dublin region as an internationally-renowned knowledge centre

**Mission:**

Dublin Institute of Technology fulfils a national and international role across higher education, supported by research, scholarship and the application of knowledge in an innovative and caring environment for students of diverse ages and backgrounds while achieving excellence in its work including the provision of services for industry and society

**Values:**

**Student-Centred** - Students know what, when and how they will learn and be assessed on each specific part of their programme with opportunity to provide timely feedback on programme content and delivery. Library, ICT, social and specialist resources provide environments for individual and group work that form integral parts of programmes. Administrative services and supports are of a quality to facilitate students in fully participating in their programmes of study and are appropriately responsive to their needs.

**Useful** - Preparing students for professional careers emphasising the importance of integrity, responsibility and entrepreneurial skills alongside the utility of knowledge and contributions to economic social and cultural development.

**Challenging** - Challenge orthodoxy via rigorous processes of discovery, critical enquiry and innovation. Making distinctive, relevant and timely research contributions to advance human knowledge.

**Inclusive** - Striving to create a friendly, collaborative and trusting community, where diversity is valued, individuals are treated with respect, encouraged to develop their potential and make their contribution, and pride is shared in our collective identity.

**Open, honest, professional and accountable** - Proactive sharing of information; acting in the Institute's best interests; with devolved authority and accountability for decisions and actions within a framework of regulations, policies and procedures.

Provide a higher education environment which underpins and serves society by supporting the economic, social and cultural life of its citizens.

**Appendix 3: Extracts from draft and working documents prepared for DIT's transition to Grangegorman (all documents are internal working documents)**

Power point Presentation Slide 3 from "*The Learning Environment on the New Campus*" 13th Jan 2010

## Need to provide for new ways of learning

- **More collaborative**, active learning with hands-on experiences
- **Integrated**, multidisciplinary
- **Blended**, learning takes place anywhere/ anytime, mobile technology with social activity
- **Immersive** with simulated or real-world experiences
- **Hybrid** activities, online with face-to-face, mixed



Power point slide 11 asks the question:

**How does the learning space fit into, support and underpin the DIT Strategic Plan?**

**Appendix 4: Extract from an email from the President's Office on the organisation of DIT**

Date: Tue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2009 10:00:10

From: [President@dit.ie](mailto:President@dit.ie)

Subject: the organisation of DIT

To: [ALLSTAFF-list@dit.ie](mailto:ALLSTAFF-list@dit.ie)

Dear Colleagues

**The Organisation of DIT**

As you know, the original Green Paper (April 2008) proposed a change in how DIT is organised internally. Following extensive discussion, these proposals were modified in the White Paper published in May 2009. The final document that has now emerged has been greatly strengthened by the wide-ranging views expressed, internally and externally, and I would like to sincerely thank all those who participated in the process.

Last week the Governing Body approved the proposals outlined in the revised 'Organisation of DIT' and the final document is available for you to view on the staff intranet at:  
(*Web page only available to staff internal to DIT*)

The agreed changes are designed to position DIT to meet the challenges and opportunities resulting from an increasingly complex higher education landscape, and to provide the best student experience with the resources allocated, both now and as the Institute moves towards a single campus at Grangegorman. Internally, the changes will help us to provide effective support for staff and to ensure a common, excellent, DIT experience for all students. Externally, they will enable us to better promote our key strengths through the creation of interdisciplinary themes which respond to key societal and economic sectors and which draw together the extensive expertise that exists across DIT.

The next immediate task is to make the transition from our current arrangements to the new structure, and we will do so in consultation with trade union representatives of all groups of staff in DIT. I know from the responses received during this process that there is enthusiasm among colleagues for change, but I also recognise that it will be a stronger, more focused DIT, in which we will use all of our strengths to best strategic advantage. It is my intention to draw in particular on the skills and experience of our senior leadership team in implementing the revised structure and arrangements are being finalised with Directors concerning their respective roles in driving the future of DIT for the next phase of development.

This is a time of significant change in higher education generally, both in terms of funding and in terms of alliances and rationalisation. Recent events and directives have demonstrated the need for 'one DIT' perspective on the deployment of available resources. Given the significance of Dublin Institute of Technology, providing over 8% of Irish higher education, it is very important for us to take steps to determine our own future, and this review has helped us to map out that future more clearly. I believe that successful implementation of these changes will underpin the continued growth and success of the Institute; its ability to offer its students and staff the opportunity to fulfil their potential; and to ensure its wider contribution to the development of the State.

If you have any questions, queries or concerns regarding the forthcoming changes, please feel free to email: [change@dit.ie](mailto:change@dit.ie) and we will endeavour to answer you fully and frankly. I look forward to working with you to achieve these goals and once again I would like to thank you most sincerely for the extensive and diverse contributions you have made to our deliberations.

With kind regards

Brian Norton

Professor Brian Norton

President

Address and contact details not supplied for the purposes of the appendix.



## **Appendix 5: Samples from the 2010 DIT undergraduate prospectus**

### **Extracts from the welcome address from the President:**

Our mission is to provide access to higher education for students of all ages and backgrounds and we believe in harnessing that diversity so that DIT students and staff can enjoy an interesting and challenging academic environment.

Our programmes are career-focused and our students benefit from links with industry, enterprise and the professions at every level.

You are about to make an important decision about where and what you will study next year.

I hope that we may see you on campus in DIT in 2010!

### **Some images and slogans used in the prospectus:**

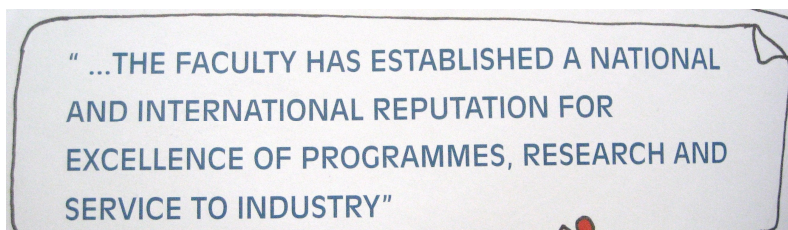
**"MATURE STUDENTS ARE A VALUED PART OF THE DIT COMMUNITY"**



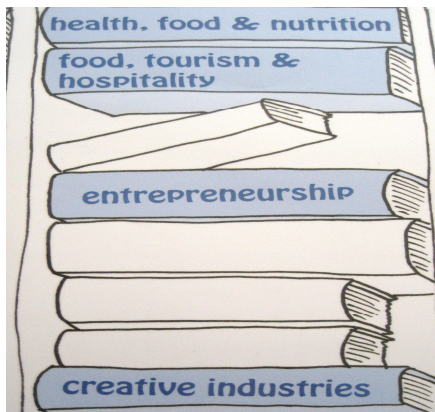
This image shows a typical small class being delivered to mature students.



This image shows the endemic slogan used by DIT in a lot of its marketing campaigns.



This image shows a Faculty's mission statement.



This image which is a section of the cover of the prospectus gives a potential student a taste of some of the subjects delivered in DIT.